**Plagiarism Position Statement**

**Spain Park School English Department**

**Definition of Plagiarism**

The word ***plagiarism*** comes from the Latin word for ***kidnap***. When you plagiarize, you take another’s words or ideas and pass them off as your own. In order to avoid plagiarism, you must give credit to the author to whom the words or ideas belong. Credit must be given whether you quote directly from that author, paraphrase (put the author’s words into your own), or make any reference to the author’s work as you build your paper. As a writer, you know which words belong to you and which belong to others. In order to avoid plagiarism, you must give credit to other writers for their words or ideas appearing in your paper.

**Examples of Plagiarism**

The following are examples of plagiarism:

Copying another student's paper from a school computer or from a printed copy

Taking key words or phrases or facts from an electronic source without properly citing the source

Rewording ideas, concepts or theories taken from a source without including appropriate documentation

Using key words or phrases from a source without placing those words in quotation marks and without placing an in-text citation in the paper at the end of each sentence containing such quotes

Placing a citation at the end of a passage in your paper without making clear which of the preceding sentences contain(s) the information taken from the source

Documenting only quoted material, but not documenting paraphrased or summarized material

Turning in a paper without proper in-text citations or without a Works Cited page

Failing to cite a fact that is not common knowledge (If you are in doubt about whether or not an item is common knowledge, ask your instructor. If your instructor is unavailable, cite the item.)

Downloading a paper from the Internet

**Avoiding Plagiarism**

The rules for the format of your paper and for the proper form for source documentation are in the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (Sixth Edition). In general, your instructor must approve each source you use. Web pages are often invalid sources for scholarly research. Your instructor will explain how to examine the domain name, root directory, and sponsoring organization of an electronic source to determine its validity.

**Consequences of Plagiarism**

If a *minor, unintentional* instance of plagiarism is discovered when any final paper is submitted, the instructor will assign a substantial grade reduction and *may* allow (determined at the sole discretion of the instructor--not guaranteed) the student to rewrite the paper within a limited time period. If allowed, this will be that student's only opportunity to correct an instance of plagiarism—ever. Any second instance will result in an automatic zero on the paper.

If *a gross, intentional* instance of plagiarism (borrowed, stolen or downloaded paper, paper without any documentation, etc.) is discovered in any final paper, a grade of zero will be assigned as a final grade for the assignment. Each individual instructor will make the final determination regarding what constitutes intentional plagiarism.

This policy was last updated 15 May 2006. Some ideas were borrowed, with permission, from the Hoover High School Plagiarism Policy.

**In Mrs. Petix’s class…**

I treat the rough draft like a final draft with little to no penalty for plagiarism--intentional or unintentional. We will look closely at the rough draft together. If plagiarism is found--big or small--I will draw your attention to it and show you how to correct your error. At that point, you will have time to rewrite the essay before the final draft is due.

Once the final draft has been submitted, I no longer tolerate plagiarism. Because you were given an opportunity to correct your errors, plagiarism in the final draft will be considered a *gross, intentional instance of plagiarism* and no credit will be awarded for the essay.